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INDEX:

- (1) Five years of Koizumi diplomacy (Part 1) -- Cooperation with US: Top leaders of two countries enjoy honeymoon-like relations, while a gulf exists between working-level officials of the two countries
- (2) Editorial: Japanese, US leaders stage-manage best shot
- (3) Editorial: Strategic ties also with Canada
- (4) GSDF to establish Civil Military Cooperation in Central Readiness Command (CRC) for "battlefront" missions
- (5) Editorial: US Navy Base at Guantanamo should be closed
- (6) Poll on Japan-US war, Japan-China war, Tokyo Trials, Japan's postwar economy-oriented stance

ARTICLES:

- (1) Five years of Koizumi diplomacy (Part 1) -- Cooperation with US: Top leaders of two countries enjoy honeymoon-like relations, while a gulf exists between working-level officials of the two countries

ASAHI (Page 1) (Full)
July 1, 2006

At a time when Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi stated, "The United States is not alone in fighting the evil. It's always with its allies. Japan stands united with the US," President George W. Bush's

eyes appeared for a moment to become somewhat misty with tears.

Koizumi said so at an official banquet on the night of June 29. The approval ratings for Bush remain low with no exit of the Iraq issue yet in sight. Koizumi's words and lengthy applause to them appeared to please Bush, who is isolated in the international community.

Also, Koizumi mentioned Elvis Presley this way: "The first English song I sang was Elvis' 'I want you, I need you, I love you.'"

The following day, on June 30, Bush and Koizumi flew to Memphis, Tennessee, aboard Air Force One, and visited Elvis' home, Graceland.

Five years ago, on June 30, Koizumi visited the presidential retreat Camp David. After exchanging greetings in his first meeting with Bush, Koizumi began emphasizing the importance of the Japan-US alliance to Bush. Koizumi said to Bush: "As Elvis said, I want you, I need you, and I love you." He also mentioned, "Japan's stance is not to blindly follow America's footsteps. Japan will work together with the US."

"'He is amazing,' the president remarked,'" a US government official said, looking back on those days. Koizumi at the time gave an impression to the US that "he is the person who says clearly he can do what he thinks he can do and he cannot do what he thinks he cannot do," according to a US government official.

In fact, Koizumi decided to dispatch Maritime Self-Defense Force vessels to the Indian Ocean and then Ground Self-Defense Force troops to Iraq. Owing to these bold decisions on overseas troop dispatches, Koizumi is "portrayed as having crossed the Rubicon twice for the president," according to a senior official of the

TOKYO 00003711 002 OF 008

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA). These decisions won him the full confidence of the president.

Koizumi dislikes his being described as "blindly following the US," according to a senior government official.

When Koizumi ran for a Lower House seat for the first time in 1969, he stressed the need for self-reliant national defense. He argued at the time: "The Japan-US Security Treaty is not something that will be definitely unchangeable. Japan should have its own vision of national defense." Koizumi had never used the term "Japan-US alliance" in the Diet sessions before he took office as prime minister.

Koizumi's current pro-US stance apparently consists of not only friendship but also political calculations. A senior Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) lawmaker close to Koizumi explained: "For the prime minister, who enjoys high popularity but whose base in the party is relatively weak, the Bush administration's support for him has been of great significance."

For the president, too, Koizumi has a strong presence.

"My father fought with Japan sixty years ago, and now, I am discussing peace with the Japanese prime minister."

This is the president's pet phrase. When meeting with the criticism that the Iraq issue has mired in confusion, Bush almost always cites Japan as a successful example of democratization to justify the war on terror in Iraq.

Over the handling of the bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) issue, Bush instructed his staff: "You should not act to drive Mr. Koizumi into a corner." The president also put a halt to the move by the US Department of State to pressure Japan to given up on its plan to develop the Azadegan oil field in Iran.

However, there is a limit to the influence of the friendship between the leaders on bilateral relations as a whole.

For example, on the realignment of US forces Japan, the

working-level talks of officials from the two countries went nowhere. Former Director of Japan Affairs David Straub began criticizing in public the Bush administration's North Korea policy.

The United States is turning its eyes to rising China and India. Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Kurt Campbell pointed out: "In the US government, there are no officials deeply involved in Japan-US relations at present." "Prime Minister Koizumi will step down shortly, and a new president will come into office in two years. Depending on circumstances, Japan and the US may not have any close ties not only at the top level but also at the working level in the future," he added.

The gaps are widening among working-level officials of the two countries.

Prime Minister Koizumi, who has built a honeymoon-like relationship with the Bush administration will soon leave the diplomatic stage. We will review the five years of Koizumi diplomacy.

(2) Editorial: Japanese, US leaders stage-manage best shot

TOKYO 00003711 003 OF 008

NIHON KEIZAI (Page 2) (Full)
July 1, 2006

Could anyone expect anything better than this hospitality? That was probably not only because Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and United States President George W. Bush have good chemistry. During the Koizumi-Bush period for over five years, the Japanese government have dispatched Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) vessels to the Indian Ocean and Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF) troops to Iraq, resulting in deepening the Japan-US alliance. The joint statement issued after the Koizumi-Bush summit confirmed that the alliance would expand the scope of its functions further, noting: "The two leaders heralded a new Japan-US alliance of global cooperation for the 21st century."

In October 2000, prior to the presidential election, an expert group on foreign policy in the US released a comprehensive report on Japan policy. The so-called Armitage-Nye Report called on the Japanese government to alter its interpretation regarding the right to collective self-defense in the Constitution, hoping to develop the Japan-US alliance into a mature political alliance, like the one between the US and Britain. The Koizumi administration rejected the proposed change of the interpretation, but in actuality, it accepted Washington's request in general and dispatched fleets and troops to the Indian Ocean and Iraq.

Under the leadership of Koizumi and Bush, Japan and the US have addressed a host of bilateral issues based on their strengthened security relations. Although there are also trade issues, like the conflict over the issue of Japan's ban on US beef imports, such trade issues are different in nature from those in the 1980s and the 1990s. Regarding foreign policy, there are also points on which both countries cannot agree. For instance, the US has taken a realistic stance toward India and a principle-like stance toward Myanmar, but Tokyo's stances toward these two countries are totally different from Washington's.

Japan and the US, however, share almost the same position on issues that will affect their national security, like the North Korean and Iranian nuclear development programs. Remembering his meeting with Sakie Yokota, the mother of abductee Megumi Yokota, Bush said in a press conference his heart was ready to break. It is unprecedented for a state leader to make such a remark. If two countries, while remaining at odds over certain issues, are in accord on basic issues and if such relations are defined as matured, Japan-US relations might be approaching a matured one.

Some observers analyze that Japan-US alliance is becoming hollowed-out at the working level, focusing on the departure of Armitage and other experts on Japanese affairs from the Bush administration. The situation, though, is quite different from that of a dozen years ago. At that time, the weakness of relations

between the Japanese and US leaders was cited as a problem. In its survey of 14 countries, the Pure Research Center found that Japan is the most pro-American country, with 63% of the Japanese surveyed replying that they have goodwill toward the US.

The Koizumi-Bush era will end in September. Are Japan-US relations at their peak now or still in the process to their peak?

(3) Editorial: Strategic ties also with Canada

NIHON KEIZAI (Page 2) (Full)

TOKYO 00003711 004 OF 008

July 2, 2006

Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi last week met with Canadian Prime Minister Harper in Ottawa. The two leaders agreed to deepen bilateral cooperation in the political and economic fields. The Harper administration has come into existence, following the first changeover of administration in about 12 years in that country with the conservative party beating the liberal party in the general election this January. Taking advantage of this first summit, the two countries should build a more strategic relationship through close dialogues and search for areas where they can cooperate with each other.

The prime minister's visit to Canada has a more significant meaning than that he stopped over there on his way to the US. Harper is determined to have positive involvement in the Asian region, the growth center of the global economy. He has shown eagerness to strengthen relations with Japan, which have not necessarily been close. He categorically showed interest in signing a free trade agreement with Japan. This is the expression of his strong diplomatic desire.

Canada is becoming even more important as Japan's partner in the international community. It is essential for Japan to maintain a stable economic relationship with that country as a supplier of natural resources, such as energy resources and minerals, based on mutual trust.

For instance, it is viewed that Canada has oil sand reserves equivalent to oil reserves in Saudi Arabia. Though there are some problems to be solved, including a high cost of extracting the material, it is drawing attention as a next-generation source of energy amid the high crude oil prices.

China is highly interested in that nation's oil sand and is also eager to procure uranium from it. China has begun strengthening relations with Canada. A Chinese company tried to buy a Canadian resources company last year, though the takeover bid failed due to commercial reasons. We must not disregard the reality that competition, which can be called a battle to obtain natural resources, is taking place.

There are many things Japan can learn from Canada. Prime Minister Harper has pledged to cut the goods and services tax, which is equivalent to Japan's consumption tax. This is a result of Canada having achieved fiscal reconstruction through strict spending cuts without depending on tax hikes. Japan can learn good lessons from it. Canada with multicultural history has rich experience in accepting foreign workers and immigrants. Its example will become a good guide for Japan, which is suffering from the declining birthrate.

During the summit, Canada has pledged assistance to Japan over the North Korea issue and cooperation for the stabilization of Afghanistan. The post-Koizumi administration should further develop bilateral ties with it.

(4) GSDF to establish Civil Military Cooperation in Central Readiness Command (CRC) for "battlefront" missions

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 3) (Abridged)
July 3, 2006

Based on its lessons from the 30 months of mission at the "battlefront" in Iraq, the Ground Self-Defense Force has decided to establish a military-civilian cooperation unit called the Civil Military Cooperation (CIMIC) in its Central Readiness Command to be established next March exclusively for overseas missions. The SDF's overseas activities will move into full swing under the slogan of improving the international security situation, as was shown by the realignment of US force realignment.

The GSDF's overseas activities date back to UN peacekeeping operations in 1992. In those days, dispatched GSDF troops mostly restored roads, bridges, and other facilities. But since the mission in East Timor in 2002, the GSDF has also hired locals to create jobs, such as operating heavy machinery.

Iraq mission

In Iraq, the GSDF established CIMIC composed of about ten senior officials responsible for construction and other work.

CIMIC was tasked with making arrangements with the Muthanna Province Reconstruction Committee and ordering the engineering unit to hire locals for restoration work. Over 3,000 Iraqi workers were hired daily.

CIMIC met twice a week to play a central role in the GSDF's support activities in Iraq.

In early days of the Iraq mission, the GSDF did not know the concept of CIMIC.

Back then, Dutch forces, which were responsible for the security of Muthanna Province, were pushing ahead with reconstruction projects with locals, who were hired through CIMIC. The GSDF modeled after it, thinking that the employment of locals would lead to improved security.

A senior GSDF official explained the advantages of CIMIC this way: "Creating jobs, it helped improve the security situation in Muthanna. It also reduced dangerous off-camp activities for GSDF troops."

There seems to be every reason for the GSDF to establish CIMIC at its Central Readiness Command based on its lessons learned in Iraq.

A unique military

CIMIC is a desperate measure allowing the SDF to engage in activities in dangerous zones. Such a system may end up lowering the hurdle for the SDF's overseas missions. Troops from 27 countries have been conducting security duties in Iraq. Only Japan sent its troops there for reconstruction assistance.

Given heavy constitutional restrictions, the SDF is not allowed to conduct security duties involving the use of force. If Japan's overseas missions continued to center on restoration operations, the SDF would be regarded as a "unique" national military."

Fierce competition with activities by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the office responsible for grant aid in the Foreign Ministry's official development assistance, may push the SDF toward more dangerous zones.

SDF troops in Kuwait and Iraq conducted live-fire drills worth years of training at home. Anticipating attacks, they also repeatedly conducted drills based on secret guidelines on the use of weapons. But a GSDF member took this view: "Drills are drills to the last. We cannot learn real lessons until we encounter a dangerous scene."

It has been 14 years since the SDF began overseas activities. The

GSDF, which has miraculously not lost even a single life in Iraq, is now set to increase the difficulty of its overseas activities.

(5) Editorial: US Navy Base at Guantanamo should be closed

ASAHI (Page 3) (Full)
July 2, 2006

US President Bush said, "The biggest mistake we made in Iraq was Abu Ghraib (abuse at that prison)." He must add the mistake at Guantanamo.

During the Afghan war in 2001, the US captured hundreds of Afghans on suspicion of having taken part in terrorist activities and transferred them to the US Navy at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba.

The US Federal Supreme Court has handed down a heavy judgment regarding the Guantanamo case. An inmate who was sent to a special tribunal brought the case to the court. In the trial, the court ruled that the tribunal itself is illegal.

The court characterized those held at Guantanamo as neither captives nor criminals but hostile combatants. The US did not apply the Geneva Convention or prosecute prisoners as criminals. It has continued to detain them in such an abnormal way.

The US treatment of Afghan prisoners is under fire from the international community, following the revelation of torture on inmates at Guantanamo. Under such circumstances, the US at last established a tribunal and prosecuted some inmates. One of the defendants then filed a lawsuit.

The Federal Supreme Court has judged that under that tribunal, the rights of the defendants have not been fully guaranteed, and, therefore, it is illegal in light of the US domestic law on the ordinary military court. It has also judged that it is against the Geneva Convention as well.

The judgment was handed down on one defendant, but it can be said that the existence of the prison, where even basic human rights are not observed, has been condemned.

Those who are suspected of being involved in terrorist activities should be relegated to the court system. Otherwise, they should be treated as prisoners. In principle, these people should be detained at appropriate facilities according to their legal status.

However, fights against terrorist groups, which have cross-border international networks and repeat indiscriminate terrorist attacks, have different aspects from conventional war. It is true that it is difficult to identify whether they should be categorized as prisoners or criminals.

It may be necessary to establish a new legal framework. In that case, there should be an international arrangement for creating such a framework, instead of each country establishing such at its own

TOKYO 00003711 007 OF 008

discretion. Until such a framework is created, the scope allowed under international law should be applied.

Guantanamo is not the only problematical case. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has established secret prisons in Eastern European countries and detained suspected terrorists there.

Human rights protection organizations in Europe have revealed that seven countries, including Britain and Sweden, detained suspects without taking appropriate procedures and handed them over to the US.

The spread of deviation from the rule of law will mar international cooperation in fights against terrorism, making it even more difficult for various countries to keep solidarity. In order to prevent such a situation from occurring, too, the US should close Guantanamo, which can be said to be a symbol of the deviation.

After that is done, the US should reunify solidarity with conscientious people who are fighting terrorism in various Islamic nations.

(6) Poll on Japan-US war, Japan-China war, Tokyo Trials, Japan's postwar economy-oriented stance

MAINICHI (Page 2) (Full)
July 3, 2006

Questions & Answers
(T = total; M = male; F = female; D = Dietmembers)

Q: What do you think about the opening of war with the US in 1941?

	T	M	F	D
Unavoidable	33	36	31	18
Reckless	59	61	58	57

Q: There's an opinion saying Japan's war with China after the Manchurian Incident was a war of aggression. What do you think about this opinion?

	T	M	F	D
Agree	40	53	31	68
Disagree	8	12	6	3

Q: Do you think the Japanese government has apologized and self-reflected enough over World War II?

	T	M	F	D
Yes	36	42	32	51
No	42	39	44	33
No need to apology or self-reflect	11	14	9	2

Q: Japan accepted the International Military Tribunal for the Far East or the so-called Tokyo Trials and restored its independence in 1951. What do you think about the trials?

	T	M	F	D
Unreasonable because the winners unilaterally tried the losers	10	13	8	8
Unreasonable but unavoidable because Japan was defeated in the war				

TOKYO 00003711 008 OF 008

	T	M	F	D
Justifiable because those to blame for the war were tried	59	65	54	61
	17	16	18	13

Q: Do you appreciate Japan's postwar stance of arming itself lightly and setting store on its economic growth?

	T	M	F	D
Yes	66	75	59	83
No	24	21	27	2

Q: What do you think Japan has lost in the postwar days?

	T	M	F	D
Social ideals	4	5	3	23
Equal society	5	6	5	5
Safe society	11	10	12	16
Local community ties	10	12	8	44
Family ties	8	8	9	36
Heart to make much of things	14	12	15	27
Feeling for others	21	25	17	44
Natural affluence	10	9	11	22
Traditional culture	5	5	5	19
Not on the list	6	6	6	13

Q: What do you think Japan should be most proud of in the postwar days?

T	M	F	D
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Economic prosperity	9	11	7	45
Technology	30	33	29	49
Peaceful nation	22	25	19	59
Free society	8	7	9	21
Health, longevity	4	3	4	38
High education level	4	4	4	20
Women's social status	8	4	11	5
International contributions	2	2	2	10
Traditional culture	2	3	1	7
Not on the list	5	5	4	5

(Note) Figures shown in percentage, rounded off. "No answer" omitted. Dietmembers were asked to pick up to three to the question about what Japan should be proud of.

Polling methodology: The survey was conducted June 17-18 over the telephone with the aim of calling a total of 1,000 voters across the nation on a computer-aided random digit sampling (RDS) basis. Answers were obtained from 1,026 persons.

SCHIEFFER